Alberta Crop Report

Crop Conditions as of October 3, 2017

Over the weekend, an intense and large system delivered cold, wet weather across the province which caused significant snowfall in some areas and brought killing frost to almost all areas across the province (See the map). The recently wet conditions also increased soil moisture levels, especially, in the Southern and Central Regions, pausing the harvest operations for a short period of time again. Prior to the weekend however, producers were able to take advantage of good weather, with harvest progress up twelve per cent from the past week. Provincially, about 72 per cent of crops have now been harvested (including all winter wheat, fall rye, dry beans, lentils and chickpeas), 14 per cent are in the swath and another 14 per cent remain standing. When compared to the 5-year averages (2012-2016), harvest progress is quite advanced in the Southern and Central Regions, but behind in the North East, North West and Peace Regions (See Table 1). Provincially, nearly 22 per cent of spring wheat, 19 per cent of barley, 38 per cent of oats and eight per cent of canola are still standing. As well, about 35 per cent of the canola across the province are in swath.

Preliminary estimates show dryland yield improving slightly for all Regions and the province as a whole, with the provincial yield index at 97.4 per cent (See Table 2). Average yields for potatoes on dryland and irrigated fields are estimated at 11.5 and 16.6 tons per acre, respectively. Yields for irrigated dry beans and sugar beets are reported at 2,400 pounds per acre and 27.0 tonnes per acre, respectively.

Crop quality has been better than normal for most crops, but expected to decline due to frost and snow flattening standing crops. Protein level in cereals is highly variable, from 10 to 20 per cent in some cases. Provincially, about 92 per cent of hard red spring wheat and 83 per cent of durum wheat are now graded in the top two grades, which is above the 5-year average. About 26 per cent of barley is eligible for malt and 59 per cent graded as Number 1. For oats, about 59 per cent is graded in the top two grades, which is lower than the 5-year average. Almost 97 per cent of harvested canola is in the top two grades, with 90 per cent graded as Number 1.

Table 1: Estimates of Crop Harvest Progress as of October 3, 2017

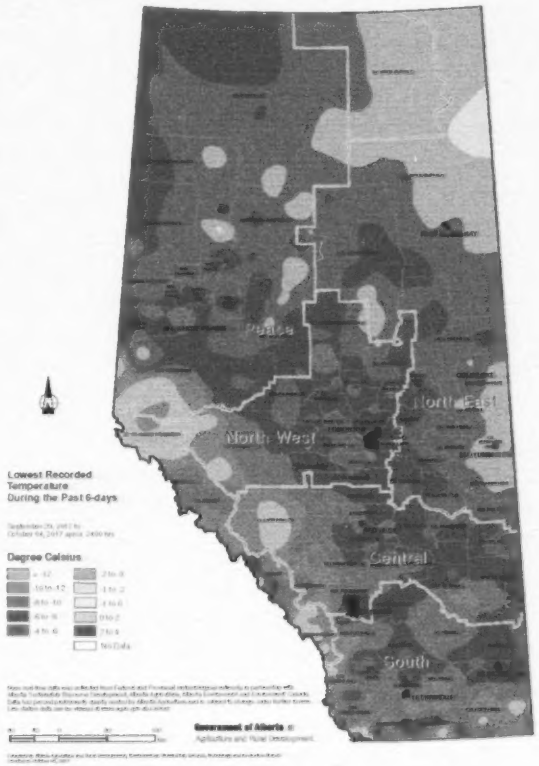
	% of Combined					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Average
Spring Wheat	100.0%	87.5%	58.4%	38.2%	67.1%	**74.5%**
Durum Wheat	100.0%	99.0%	---	---	---	**99.9%**
Barley	99.8%	89.2%	49.0%	25.6%	66.3%	**76.6%**
Oats	99.9%	85.5%	44.5%	12.5%	61.6%	**51.1%**
W. Wheat	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%			**100.0%**
Canola	99.1%	81.7%	44.5%	12.6%	44.2%	**57.1%**
Dry Peas	100.0%	99.7%	99.2%	96.9%	95.5%	**98.9%**
Lentils	100.0%	98.8%	100.0%	---	---	**99.8%**
Chick peas	100.0%	98.5%	---	---	---	**99.9%**
Mustard	100.0%	95.0%	---	---	---	**98.5%**
Potatoes	88.4%	93.3%	---	75.0%	---	**87.5%**
All crops	**99.1%**	**87.1%**	**53.0%**	**26.3%**	**58.0%**	**71.6%**
Last Week	**98.6%**	**75.9%**	**32.4%**	**14.4%**	**39.8%**	**60.1%**
5-yr average	**93.6%**	**76.8%**	**75.6%**	**69.5%**	**85.2%**	**81.5%**

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Table 2: Dryland Yield Estimates (Major Crops) as of October 3, 2017

	Estimated Yield (bushel/acre)					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spr. Wheat	34.9	47.3	56.2	59.2	43.2	**47.3**
Dur. Wheat	34.4	37.6	---	---	---	**34.9**
Barley	43.5	65.3	76.9	69.3	53.5	**60.6**
Oats	44.0	70.1	86.2	82.9	71.9	**76.6**
Canola	28.6	39.7	44.4	43.3	39.2	**39.6**
Dry Peas	30.6	45.3	47.3	45.2	46.8	**39.7**
Yield Index	**75.0%**	**97.0%**	**111.9%**	**100.2%**	**114.2%**	**97.4%**
September 19	**73.9%**	**95.1%**	**109.0%**	**98.2%**	**109.7%**	**95.2%**
Last Year	**106.3%**	**120.5%**	**119.1%**	**109.6%**	**116.1%**	**114.1%**

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey



Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program. The precipitation map is compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Environmental Stewardship Branch, Engineering and Climate Services Section.

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REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2017 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- Harvest operation is almost complete for the season. Despite dry conditions, the cereal crop grades are higher than what was expected earlier in the season. Crop quality is above the provincial 5-year averages for malt barley and the top two grades of hard red spring wheat, durum wheat, oats and dry peas. Protein level is highly variable and in some instances quite high. About 72 per cent of canola is graded as Number 1 and 19 per cent as Number 2, which is lower than the provincial 5-year average.
- About 88 per cent of potatoes have been harvested, with yields on dryland and irrigated fields at 11.0 and 16.6 tons per acre, respectively. Yields for irrigated dry beans and sugar beets are estimated at 2,400 pounds per acre and 27.0 tonnes per acre, respectively.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as 39 (37) per cent poor, 28 (29) per cent fair and 33 (34) per cent good.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- Harvest was in full swing for a few days prior to the weekend, when snow storms flattened many standing crops and halted operations. In this Region, 87 per cent of the crops are in the bin, up 11 per cent form a week ago. About 13 per cent of the crops are still in the field, six per cent standing and seven per cent in the swath.
- Crop quality is expected to decline, due to frost. Currently, crop quality is above the provincial 5-year average for malt barley and the top two grades of the spring wheat, durum wheat, oats and dry peas, while it is in line with the provincial 5-year average for canola top two grades.
- About 93 per cent of potatoes have been harvested, with dryland yield at 10.0 tons per acre.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as five (30) per cent poor, 30 (35) per cent fair, 39 (27) per cent good and 26 (eight) per cent excellent.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- Favorable weather conditions allowed producers to make 21 per cent harvest progress, but rain followed by snow halted harvest operations. Nearly 53 per cent of the crops are in the bin, 23 per cent in swath and 24 per cent still standing. Most of standing crops have been lodged or flattened, due to heavy snow and wind.
- Crop quality for the top two grades of the spring wheat, canola and dry peas has been reported above the provincial 5-year average, while only 13 per cent of barley is eligible for malt. Only two per cent of oats and dry peas are graded as Number 1.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as five (six) per cent fair, 28 (17) per cent good and 66 (74) per cent excellent, with one (three) per cent excessive.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- Producers took advantage of about three to four days of good weather to advance harvest progress by about 12 per cent, before rainfall and snow halted harvest operations again. Almost 26 per cent of crops are in the bin, 35 per cent in swath and 39 per cent still standing.
- To date, crop quality for the top two grades of spring wheat and canola is above the provincial 5-year averages. Only four per cent of barley is eligible for malt and 18 per cent of oats are graded as top two grades. No Number 1 dry peas were reported, while 57 per cent of dry peas are graded as Number 2.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as five (five) per cent fair, 23 (67) per cent good and 68 (27) per cent excellent, with four (one) per cent excessive.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Harvest is progressing in this Region, with no significant precipitation. However, fog and morning dew made shorter harvesting days. About 58 per cent of crops are in the bin, compared to 40 per cent a week ago, while 23 per cent are still in swath and 19 per cent standing.
- The quality for harvested crops is above the provincial 5-year averages for malt barley and the top two grades of spring wheat, oats, canola and dry peas.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as five (five) per cent poor, 16 (20) per cent fair, 46 (43) per cent good and 28 (28) per cent excellent, with five (four) per cent excessive.

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